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Chicago
United States.
America

Venice & Milan
May 30th 1870

My dearest

After a couple of days at Florence I reached Venice on Thursday Florence I shall only remember by the Pitti palace, & a magnificent drive up the mountain to Fiesole about sunset from which the view of the monastery of Vallambrosa, reminded one of Miltons lines; — Venice so unlike every other place & you would have been delighted

with the gondolas with
the sea in all their
streets & when the tide
goes out the seaweed
hangs to the basements
of their houses & marble
steps of their palaces.
had a gondolier drifting
me about all day
nearly — finding time to
visit the doge's palace
(you remember the picture
in the Chicago Exposition)
with the dungeons under;
& stand on the bridge of
sighs from which the
prisoners dropped,
at 9 in the evening a
splendid entertainment
operatic concert on
the Grand Canal which
was one mass of gondolas

the concert boat, one mass of colored lamps (mine had four) with colored paper lamps always catches fire) met at the Rialto bridge the concert boat; hailing every two or three hundred yards & giving a piece; then moved & all the gondoliers fought & struggled to get a near place the English & American cheering on their gondoliers, amid roars of laughter & Italian profanity; left on Saturday afternoon for Milan passing through but not stopping at Verona (scene of Romeo & Juliet) - went to the great Cathedral for morning service & listened with all my ears to the Italian

sermon, making out that it
was on the subject of the real
presence in the sacrament; &
quite eloquent — the Cathedral
impressed me more than
any yet, for grandeur &
solemnity. immense & all
of marble (I think). I have
not heard from you since
you reached the sea side
so cannot refer to your
doings, trying to quiet my
anxieties about you all by
the old adage that no
news is good news,
with love to mama
& my dears —

Ever yours

Ernest